GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3206
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2017
Consumer Protection Council
Choudhary Shri Ram Tahal;Sanjar Shri Alok

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the task assigned to the Consumer Protection Council in the country;
(b) whether it is a fact that many States have not set up the council as yet, if so, whether action has been taken by the Government in this regard, so as to establish such councils in these States;
(c) if not, the reasons therefor;
(d) the number of institutions working for consumer right protection and the total financial assistance provided to these institutions during the last year;
(e) the laid-down procedure to assess the performance of these institutions; and
(f) whether there is a need to set up mobile PDS system, if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C.R. CHAUDHARY)

(a) : The Central Consumer Protection Council, State Consumer Protection Council and District Consumer Protection Council, under the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, are to ensure the protection of the rights of the consumer at the National, State and District level. These councils advise the Central Government, State Government and the District Authorities respectively to take action on issues relating to the rights of the consumers.

(b)&(c) : As per the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, it is the responsibility of the State Government to set up State Consumer Protection Council in the States. As per available information (status at Annexure - I). 23 States/UTs have established Consumer Protection Councils. The Central Government have issued a number of advisories to set up such councils. Besides, the State Governments are sensitised about the need to set up such councils, in the National Conferences and Regional Conferences, whenever held.

(d)&(e) : A list of Institutions/VCOs/organizations to whom grant have been given from Consumer Welfare Fund during last one year is at Annexure - II. The performance of these Institutions/VCOs/organizations are monitored in the Department through periodic reports and various meeting held from time to time.

(f) : Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/Union Territory (UT) Governments wherein operational responsibilities for allocation of foodgrains within the States/UTs, identification of eligible beneficiaries, issuance of ration cards to them and supervision over and monitoring of functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) rest with the concerned State/UT Governments. Under the guidelines issued by the Department for strengthening of PDS, States/UTs are to ensure that no consumer/card holder has to travel more than 3 kms to reach his FPS. As per the guidelines, in areas which cannot be covered by static fair price shops, mobile vans may be introduced to cover the consumers residing in hilly remote, far-flung, desert, tribal and inaccessible areas. The guidelines include provision of sales centre at weekly Haats to provide essential commodities at fixed price in some rural areas, particularly in Tribal Areas which will be a great boon to consumers of these areas.

The Targets Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2015 notified on 20.03.2015 requires the State Government to ensure that the FPS is so located that the consumer or ration card holder does not have to face difficuly to reach the FPS and that proper coverage is ensured in hilly, desert, tribal and such other areas difficult to access.

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